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START I: A Retrospective

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Abstract

For decades, the United States (U.S.) and Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) were competing to be the dominant global military power. However, after a series of crises, both states realized that if the status quo was maintained, it could mean the destruction of their states and the rest of the world. Thus, the U.S. and USSR agreed to limit their production of nuclear weapons. Eventually, the states decided that arms reduction would be the future and the resulting agreement would change the international power structure. The negotiations lasted for nine years, including a hiatus, and also led to another iteration of the treaty before the agreement was ratified. This study analyzes various aspects of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) negotiations, including the different stakeholders, their goals and tactics, alternatives, and the other factors that led to the final agreement. This study also analyzes the long-term effects of the treaty, its success, and who came out on top from START.

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Introduction

During most of the Cold War, the U.S. and USSR engaged in a series of arms races to gain influence and hard power globally. Tensions from the arms races culminated with the Cuban Missile Crisis. Afterwards, the states began the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT). These talks began so the states could reach an agreement on limiting the deployment of various nuclear weapons, including intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs) (U.S. Department of State). Although successful, later iterations of SALT were not as effective and the states eventually regressed to the status quo. This did not change until 1982, when Ronald Reagan suggested a reduction in arms instead of solely limitation (Reagan 1982). The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty was proposed to be a comprehensive and binding plan for both states, and it set out to reduce the arsenals of both powers (Reagan 1982). Although past frameworks were insufficient, the states had a mutual understanding that the status quo was unacceptable. START has improved since its 1992 ratification and it is still used as a framework for arms reduction today.

Actors

Actor A-The United States

Due to the length of START talks, the negotiating team of the U.S. spanned across two presidents: Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush. During the Reagan Administration, the idea for START was first proposed during President Reagan's address at Eureka College (Reagan 1982). The agreement was coupled with a plan to modernize the United States' arsenal by reducing strategic arms. As of 1982, the U.S. found itself on the wrong side of the balance of strategic power. The U.S. wanted to remedy the situation by reducing strategic weapon stores (The White House 1985). Strategic arms reduction was only one facet of Reagan's foreign policy because he also wanted to improve America's standing abroad, especially in Latin American states (Rosenfeld 1986). In 1989, George H. W. Bush became president and continued the talks with the USSR. During his time as a negotiator, Bush worked to build confidence with summits and the U.S. Verification and Stability Initiative, which gave both parties experience in verifying and monitoring their arsenals (Federation of American Scientists). Much of Bush's work on START I was based in finalizing the agreement, and he eventually signed the treaty in 1991 (Federation of American Scientists). Throughout the negotiations, both administrations remained relatively cohesive within their negotiating teams.

Actor B-The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)

Throughout the USSR's involvement in the START I talks, the USSR, due to its authoritarian regime, followed a Monolithic Model and each negotiating team was relatively cohesive. That being said, over the course of the START negotiations, the USSR had a high turnover on heads of state. One of the leaders during the negotiations was Mikhail Gorbachev who worked with both U.S. presidents on START (Federation of American Scientists). Of the

Soviet premiers, Gorbachev was seen as the most cooperative during talks (Nye 1989). Gorbachev oversaw most the agreements on ICBM ceilings and other concrete limits, which were a point of contention throughout the negotiations (Bennett 1997).

However, after the signing of the treaty, the USSR went through a major change. The dissolution of the Soviet Union gave birth to four nuclear post-Soviet states: the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, Belarus, and Ukraine. This became a problem for the ratification process because the agreement was set up to be bilateral (Federation of American Scientists). To remedy the situation, the Lisbon Protocol was created so all of the post-Soviet states could sign on and begin the drawdown. Of all of the actors, the USSR was the most dynamic because of the series of leadership and regime changes.

Actor C-The United States Congress

The U.S. Congress was responsible for the ratification of the START agreement. During negotiations, Congress ensured that the agreement would include concrete reductions in the quantity of ICBMs and other strategic arms to appeal to the electorate (Nye 1989). It is also noteworthy that, much like the presidency, Congress experienced a change in leadership. Congressional leadership changed between the two major parties multiple times throughout the negotiation and ratification phases of START I (U.S. Senate).

Conditions at the Onset of Negotiations

The negotiations and final product from START talks signaled a shift in Soviet-American relations and the negotiation paradigm that surrounded the arms control debate. At the time that Ronald Reagan proposed START in 1982, he asserted that there was “malaise and resentment [of the West]” within the USSR and that was due to failed agreements and talks in the past (Reagan 1982). Before START was proposed, ripeness was the dominant paradigm due to the nature of the arms race that the United States and USSR were in. This is because arms races are very similar to the game of Chicken (Starkey 2010). Throughout the 1960s and up until 1982, agreements such as the resolution during the Cuban Missile Crisis and the SALT agreements came about because the status quo became absolutely unacceptable for both parties. In fact, the SALT agreements proved to be ineffective because of the rationality of the United States and USSR. SALT II was especially ineffective because of its “high ceilings and serious inequalities” (The White House 1982). Thus, it was not adopted and both parties reverted to the status quo. However, Reagan expressed his commitment to making a concrete agreement and building a more “constructive” relationship with the USSR (Reagan 1982). In his speech at Eureka College, Reagan marked the transition from relying on ripeness to focusing on readiness. This transition from solely resolving the Mutually Hurting Stalemate to focusing on an agreement that is mutually beneficial as well as long-term was a priority in Reagan’s initial START proposal. Nevertheless, START I marked the transition from just focusing on benefits and costs via ripeness to cooperation via Readiness.

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Role of Public Opinion

During the first couple years of the Reagan Administration, public opinion was lulled into accepting the status quo, as the Administration's official policy on arms control was that it was more of a problem than a solution (Nye 1989). However, this lull was short-lived, and Reagan eventually proposed START to appeal to the American public. Thus, throughout the drafting process for START, the public placed a high value on arms control. During the pre-Gorbachev era, arms control was a top priority for the American public because the USSR had a strategic advantage on many fronts (Nye 1989). This pressure compelled the Reagan Administration to maintain momentum during START talks, especially when the USSR abandoned talks in 1983. In order to get the USSR back to the negotiating table, Reagan signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. This agreement removed the missiles from Western Europe (Federation of American Scientists). While the commitment to arms control was mostly consistent with the views/priorities of the American public, there were two challenges that public opinion posed. First and foremost, the United States had to properly communicate progress to the public. This led the United States to focus on communicating reductions of arms in terms of quantity as opposed to other proposed criteria. When it comes to arms control, the public places a high value on numbers because they are the easiest to understand as opposed to criteria such as missile range (Nye 1989). A reduction in the number of arms would translate to a safer world in the eyes of the average citizen, which was important since nuclear winter theory permeated the arms control dialogue (Robock 1989). The second challenge came about when Gorbachev ascended to power. Unlike his predecessors, Gorbachev was more committed to arms control and the public had more confidence in him (Nye 1989). This reduced the need for frequent public reassurance of progress and inadvertently led to slightly less pressure being put on the United States and USSR. However, these challenges did not impede negotiations and momentum was maintained.

Issues at Stake

The negotiations surrounding START illustrated a very important issue for both the United States and USSR: the global balance of power was changing. As START negotiations progressed, analysts found that the diffusion of power became more and more apparent. According to Joseph Nye, this was due to a reduction of hard power on both sides throughout the talks, which resulted in more states becoming more politically active (Nye 1989). This gave way to the phenomenon of Polycentrism, which is a global power structure in which the United States and USSR are still hard power centers, but other states can establish themselves as political centers (Starkey 2005). As START became more of a reality, this power shift became more apparent. Thus, it would be beneficial for both actors to ensure that their exchange in hard power translated into a comparable gain in soft power.

Structure of Negotiations

Summary of Structure (Bilateral, public/private, High Politics)

The structure of talks has a great effect on how negotiations are carried out. Factors such as the number of actors, whether or not the talks are public, and whether or not the actors perceive the issue as high-politics or low-politics can affect the proposal process. Typically, high-politics issues are typically addressed by the highest level of government. On the other hand, low-politics issues are much less urgent and can be addressed by more junior government members (Starkey 2005).

By virtue of its subject matter, the START I talks were bilateral in nature and were tended to by the highest government officials. Arms control was certainly considered a high-politics issue by both actors, especially because nuclear arms were involved. While arms reduction was a highly salient issue for the U.S., it was not as serious for the USSR because the USSR had a strategic advantage over the United States in strategic arms, especially in terms of throw weight (The White House 1982). Finally, many of the talks and summits between the U.S. and USSR were known to the public. Minimal back-channeling occurred during negotiations and external observers were aware of the agenda and progress made (Bennett 1997).

Opportunities and Problems of the Structure

The bilateral structure of the negotiations gave the actors a less complex forum in comparison to negotiations with three or more actors (Starkey 2010). Therefore, one can infer that the interests and intentions were much easier to communicate between the U.S. and USSR. One could assert that the public nature of the talks also fostered the development of Track II diplomacy, which typically leads to a more impartial analysis of alternatives (Starkey 2010). That being said, the secondary actors can lead to problems in team cohesion. While the negotiating teams could be cohesive at the highest level, they will also need to appeal to their domestic governments and allies, and those interests could cause internal conflicts. Such was the case when NATO deployed Pershing II missiles in Europe and angered the USSR to the point of walking away from negotiations in the process (The White House 1985).

Influences: The Two-Level Game and Track II

During the START talks, both the two-level game and Track II diplomacy came heavily into play. In the case of the United States, all treaties must be ratified by both chambers of Congress. Without ratification by Congress, any agreement made would only be an executive agreement, and one can infer that an executive agreement would not be viable for lasting arms control. In order to make an agreement that could be ratified by Congress, the agreement had to appeal to the American electorate as well. This is due to the fact that each congressman wanted to retain his office (Morrow 1991). In order to make the agreement appeal to the U.S. electorate, the proposal must include provisions that the public could easily translate into progress (Nye 1989). For example, the public is more likely to understand a reduction in the number of ICBMs, but perhaps not other limitation metrics, such as throw weight or the number of delivery

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vehicles. This compelled the United States team to focus on arms reduction by quantity of the drawdown. Moreover, Congress could influence START by setting the defense budget. Congress had been known for making adjustments in the defense budget in order to bring the USSR to the table and show good faith, especially during the negotiations of SALT I and SALT II (Morrow 1991). Thus, Congress had a significant role to play during the START talks.

In the case of the USSR, the two-level game did not come into play until the USSR's dissolution. When the USSR dissolved, the Duma was established, and they were given the power to ratify treaties much like the United States Congress. One can infer that there was some concern that the newly-formed Russian Federation might not ratify START in its final form in 1991, but it was passed with ease (Federation of American Scientists). While the Duma did not play a major role in the end of the negotiations, it is something that cannot be ignored.

Finally, due to the publicity surrounding the START negotiations, Track II diplomacy came into play during the final stages of negotiations. During negotiations, many drawdown strategies and criterion for the drawdowns were proposed, and many academics commissioned research to assess the viability of the different proposals. When talks began in 1982, the Arms Control Association commissioned research on many of the different initial proposals (Krepon 1983). This report focused on reductions based on the SALT II framework, flat reductions, percentage cuts coupled with an arms freeze, reductions in operational forces (launchers and reentry vehicles), and reductions based on throw weight (Krepon 1983). The conclusion from this research is that many of the proposals at the time were not viable due to the extreme inequality between the arsenals of the United States and USSR. However, progress in Track II diplomacy mirrors the progress of talks between the actors, and in 1989, a new evaluation was conducted on the revised drawdown models. The analyses were conducted in conjunction with various analysis organizations within the U.S. Department of Defense and focused on various drawdown models involving warheads and delivery vehicles. Unlike the research from 1989, these analyses also explored the drawdowns from the perspective of the USSR more extensively. In fact, this analysis served as a framework for the final START agreement and led to the United States' suggestion to follow a 2-2-2-1 drawdown limit (Owens Et. Al. 1995). As the negotiations progressed, these Track II actors had considerable influence on helping both parties find the most viable solutions.

Additional Framing Concerns

START was initially proposed because the United States experienced a major change in policy between Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan. The United States was struggling against the USSR in their constant contest for global influence as demonstrated by the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Reagan wanted to regain the strategic advantage the U.S. had over the USSR, so he coupled his proposal for START with a modernized defense system and the establishment of the Reagan Doctrine. Between the USSR's advantage in ICBM capabilities and its increased global involvement in areas like Afghanistan, Reagan's chief policy goal was to level the playing field again. This resulted in an ambitious foreign policy that supported pro-capitalist in states such as

Nicaragua as well as leading the movement in arms reduction (Rosenfeld 1986). START was ultimately one component of an entire mission to restore U.S. supremacy over the USSR and the negotiations were complemented by missions abroad.

Negotiation Proceedings

During negotiations, it is important for each actor to not only know their goals but also their limits. Throughout the proceedings, the actors have to guess the goals and limits of the other parties in order to come to an agreement. In diplomacy, this is characterized by green lines and red lines. An actor's green line is defined as the main goal of the negotiations and represents the ideal outcome. In contrast, a red line is the very least an actor can accept from the negotiations. The concept of red lines and green lines is important to diplomacy because agreements come about due to an overlap between each actor's red lines and green lines. This is known as the zone of agreement, or the set of agreements that are acceptable by both actors (Starkey 2010). It is important for an agreement to come from the zone of agreement or else the actors are forced to accept the next best alternative. This is known as the Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement, or BATNA.

BATNA for the Actors

In order to understand the BATNAs for the United States and USSR, one must remember the nature of the diplomatic game the actors have been playing throughout the Cold War. As mentioned earlier, the status quo for the arms debate was an arms race. When analyzed in the realm of game theory, the arms race is like the game of Chicken (Starkey 2005). According to game theory, rational actors will continue the proliferation of arms until a breaking point without negotiation. As a result, if negotiations bear no fruit, then the game of Chicken will resume. Because of game theory, the BATNA for the United States and USSR is the status quo, which made drafting a reliable agreement that much more important.

United States-Green Lines and Red Lines

The United States' main goal with START was to enhance deterrence and increase stability of its nuclear arsenal. The chief green line of the U.S. was a "significant" reduction in ICBMs and other ballistic missiles, which the U.S. deemed to be the most destabilizing nuclear weapons. This was the most important green line for the U.S. since the USSR had a marked advantage in ballistic missile technology, plus Soviet missiles had better throw weights (The White House 1982). This green line also required an emphasis on the number of ICBMs, as the public would respond more favorably to a reduction in the quantity of arms as opposed to simply a reduction in throw weight (Nye 1989). Concerning ICBMs, other requirements in the green line included a ban on the testing, development, deployment of rapid reload capability for fixed missile launchers, and a limit on the number of stored ICBMs (The White House 1982).

In terms of the red lines for the United States, the focus was on maintaining a comparable ICBM arsenal to that of the USSR and maintaining a general framework for strategic arms

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reduction (The White House 1982, The White House 1983). First, the requirement of maintaining a sufficient ICBM arsenal served as a red line because, when coupled with the other arms reductions, the U.S. believed that maintaining some capacity in ICBMs was a “prerequisite” for its security (The White House 1982). The United States’ other red lines were outlined in the Basic Elements Paper, which was the broad framework used for its goals. Due to its broad nature and the fact that it served as the minimum for an agreement, the United States did not authorize the dissemination of the paper until at least the third phase of talks. This was to prevent the USSR from undermining the efforts of the U.S. by branding the goals as too broad, which could compromise the goal of establishing concrete limits on arms (The White House 1983).

USSR-Green Lines and Red Lines

For the USSR, START was quite problematic for its strategic advantage. As mentioned above, the USSR had superior ICBM capabilities compared to the United States (The White House 1982). Thus, the green line for the USSR was to reduce the inevitable losses of arms as much as possible. In order to do this, the USSR’s green line would involve arms limitations based on throw weight as opposed to a ceiling on the aggregate missile launchers and bombers. The USSR’s green line can be shown through a revised version of SALT II, as many of the provisions were more favorable to the USSR arsenal (Bennett 1997). This is because the proposed reductions by the U.S. would lead to the USSR having to dismantle ninety percent of its ICBMs in contrast to the fifty percent reduction on the end of the United States (Bennett 1997). Through a reduction in throw weight, the USSR would be able to hold more of its ICBMs, which constitute a great deal of its leverage over the United States.

The USSR’s red line is unique in that it does not necessarily directly involve arms reduction at all. Rather, the USSR’s red line was that the United States cannot deploy new missiles in Europe (Bennett 1997). This red line was violated by NATO when it deployed Pershing II missiles and cruise missiles in Europe (The White House 1985). This led to the USSR leaving the negotiating table for some time until the INF Treaty was enacted (Federation of American Scientists).

Tactics Used

In diplomacy, each negotiation tactic can be grouped into either competitive or cooperative negotiation tactics. In terms of competitive tactics, the strategies are rooted in the notion that the particular negotiations occurring are a zero-sum gain. One of these strategies is positional bargaining, which is used when an actor proposes one position and refuses to move from it. Another is coercive diplomacy, which involves one actor compelling another to meet a specific demand with either the use of or the threat of force. Coercive diplomacy is closely related to the negotiating tactics of intimidation or Chicken, which can both involve a certain degree of force. In contrast, collaborative diplomacy occurs when both actors find common interests and frame the negotiations in such a way so that problem solving is the main focus

(Starkey 2010). One collaborative method of negotiation is interest-based bargaining, which is a tactic that involves the actor learning about the other's needs and trying to find common ground. This tactic is closely related to both the listening strategy and confidence building. Another good collaborative tactic is cutting the cost of compliance, which builds confidence for the other party by reducing the risk of carrying out a given agreement (Starkey 2010). Actors can also focus on solving their problem by emphasizing a common vision, which can be useful for starting negotiations or building momentum.

Because of the United States' poor experience with SALT II, the U.S. wanted to ensure that a concrete agreement on arms reduction that the USSR would not defect from was made. To achieve this end, the United States focused on communicating its intentions clearly and focusing on collaborative negotiation tactics. First, the United States focused on communicating the difference between slow-flying "clearly second-strike systems" and more destabilizing weapons such as ICBMs (The White House 1982). This tactic has some aspects of sequencing, because the proposed figures for reducing strategic arms on both sides were contentious for both the United States and USSR. By differentiating these two types of weapons, this could have made the USSR more amenable to reducing its arsenal. The United States also took advantage of Track II diplomacy by having the Department of Defense commission analyses on the drawdown possibilities for each state's arsenal (Owens Et. Al. 1995). By not solely relying on the United States' negotiating team, the U.S. was using confidence-building measures and cutting the cost of compliance to further garner support from the USSR for their proposal. By analyzing the different drawdown methods and intermediate limits, the U.S. could find a drawdown that would give the USSR more flexibility, which would reduce the USSR's risk and prevent defection (Owens Et. Al. 1995).

However, not every tactic the U.S. used was collaborative. The United States was aware that, in order for congressmen to get reelected, the agreement had to have some concrete reductions in the number of arms to appeal to the electorate (Morrow 1991). Thus, the United States was able to get these reductions by making the USSR aware of its limited authority due to the two-level game. The United States also strategically lied by omission to protect its interests. This was mainly done during the early rounds of negotiations by withholding the Basic Elements Paper until at least the third round of negotiations. This was due to the fear that the USSR would undermine the United States' efforts by saying that the proposal suggested by the U.S. was too broad (The White House 1983). To review, the United States put an emphasis on collaborative tactics to build the USSR's confidence but was also able to leverage its limited authority when needed.

While the United States focused on collaborative tactics, the USSR put an emphasis on competitive tactics in order to prevent excessive losses from arms reduction. A great deal of the USSR's tactics can be derived from positional bargaining and taking advantage of deadlines. For example, the USSR would use positional bargaining and misinformation by portraying their positions as final, which pressured the U.S. to make concessions. In this same strain, the USSR would demand concessions from the U.S. close to the end of their summits, which is known as

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the “eleventh hour squeeze” (Bennett 1997). The USSR would also try to portray limited authority by stating that Soviet generals were not on board with the proposals made by the United States (Bennett 1997). However, the USSR also took advantage of external events to guilt the United States into concessions by intimidation. This was illustrated by the USSR walking away from negotiations after NATO’s deployment of Pershing II missiles in Europe (The White House 1985). The USSR did not return to negotiations until the conflict was resolved in the form of the INF Treaty, which mixed both intimidation and linkage (U.S. Department of State 2001). Due to the risks of losing major leverage over the U.S., the USSR had to focus on competitive tactics to ensure that the losses from arms reduction were minimal.

Successful Tactics

As mentioned previously, a very large part of the United States’ proposals was the fact that reductions had to be focused on reductions in the quantity of arms so the electorate would approve of the treaty (Nye 1989). The United States was successful in achieving this end through keeping the two-level nature of talks in the foreground via limited authority. Another successful tactic the U.S. used was simply taking initiative. Based on my research, it seems that the U.S. was the first to make proposals throughout the talks (Federation of American Scientists). This seems to have paid off in more soft power in the long term, which is further explained in the section titled *The Winners*.

In terms of the USSR’s successful strategies, the state was the most successful in using linkage to their advantage. The USSR saw an opportunity with the NATO missiles in Europe to hold the START agreement hostage unless concessions were made, and it paid off by solving the issue of missile deployment in Europe for the Soviets (The White House 1985, U.S. Department of State).

Effects of Time, Location, and Venue

During the START negotiations, both parties tried to set up venues and times that were impartial to either side. Many different rounds of talks occurred in Geneva, which is typically used for impartiality. Geneva was used as a meeting place throughout the START talks, and it was used for each side to present their draft agreements as well. The United States and the USSR also alternated hosting negotiating teams, as a few summits were held in Moscow and Washington D.C. between 1989 and 1991 (Federation of American Scientists).

Moreover, timing was manipulated by the USSR to pressure the United States and NATO to reduce their aggression. At one point, NATO deployed Pershing II missiles in Europe to increase security, and this led to the USSR suspending talks. At the time, it seemed that violence would break out again between the United States and the USSR. However, instead of increasing pressure on the USSR, the action drove the USSR from the negotiating table and on the diplomatic offensive (The White House 1985). Fearing the loss of momentum, the United States worked with the USSR to create the INF Treaty, which brought the USSR back to the

negotiating table (Federation of American Scientists). In conclusion, the timing and venues were controlled to try and maintain neutrality so the START talks would not fall apart.

Analysis of Outcome

The Winners

When it comes to diplomacy and negotiations, the victors can be declared in many ways and, ultimately, winning depends on scale of reward and time. One way to judge an actor's success immediately after a negotiation is through game theory. According to game theory, the winner of the game is the actor who comes out with the biggest gain in utility, as shown in the Prisoner's Dilemma and Chicken models (Starkey 2010). In both models, the winner is determined by which actor can maximize their utility. That being said, this analysis can only judge a winner in the short term. Since diplomacy rarely happens in isolation and parties will often have to work with each other again, winners could be determined by who establishes the most goodwill to ensure that future iterations occurred (Olekalns & Smith 2007). In a similar strain, a winner can be determined by what kind of power benefits are gained from the agreement. More specifically, the prospect of soft power is a fair indicator of which actors are winners for an agreement. Many states use soft power as a metric of success because leading by example leads to more influence in both future iterations of negotiations with a given actor as well as the international community as a whole (Nye 1989).

As mentioned previously, START was an unprecedented agreement because it was the first of its kind to focus on arms reduction as opposed to simply limitation. Therefore, there were many benefits that were experienced by both the United States and USSR. START was an agreement that showed the commitment of both the U.S. and the USSR to addressing the issue of global arms proliferation. Thus, both states gained the favor of the international community to some degree because of the mutual nature. However, while both actors gained some favor from the international community, the United States would ultimately come out on top from START. This is because the short-term benefits that the USSR gained from START did not translate into substantial influence benefits in the future.

Before one can understand why the U.S. was the ultimate winner from the START agreement, one must understand the short-term victory that the USSR won from START. In the final version of START, the model used for drawdown limits was agreed to be a schedule with equal ceilings at the end of the third, fifth, and seventh years after the treaty's ratification. The ceilings in the final version were based off the USSR's straight-line drawdown as opposed to the one that the United States proposed. As a result, the USSR had more flexibility during the drawdown, especially in regard to multiple warhead ballistic missiles (Owens Et. Al. 1995). Because of the nature of this drawdown limit, the USSR was able to hang onto some warheads longer than the U.S. and thus maintain some hard power advantage during disarmament. Thus, in the short term, the USSR won through a more favorable deal.

Unfortunately for the USSR, the victory from the drawdown limits was short-lived and the U.S. came out on top. This is because the United States was able to gain more soft power

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from START while being able to maintain other sources of hard power. First, while START reduced the amount of nuclear warheads and other missiles, the agreement did not address conventional weapons. This would prove to be important because after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the United States stood uncontested as the global “military hegemon” (Starkey 2010). This power structure, which began after the dissolution, is called Unipolarity because the U.S. military stands uncontested as a military power (Starkey 2010). Due to the dissolution, the Russian Federation’s hard power capacity is a shadow of what it once was. Moreover, the U.S. has been able to gain more soft power from START than the Russian Federation has. This is shown through the agreements that came about thanks to START, which include START II, START III, and New START. Regardless of whether or not any of the future agreements were ratified, one could assert that the United States gained influence because the U.S. was regarded as the initiator for all of these agreements. Moreover, due to the United States’ leadership on agreements such as START, one can assert that the U.S. had a smoother transition into a more soft power-dominated world. This is best shown by how the Russian Federation handles international crises. For example, in 2014, Russia annexed Crimea under the guise of protecting ethnic Russians in the region (Englund 2014). This scenario demonstrates Russia’s desire to dominate with hard power, and it shows that the state has not adjusted well to using soft power. This is not to say that the United States is a model for soft power necessarily because they are also known for exerting their hard power in scenarios, such as the war in Iraq. However, it could be argued that the United States is more accustomed to using collective action in other facets of diplomacy. All in all, the United States gained much more than what was shown on paper, and thus the USSR got the short end of the stick in the long-term.

Critical Errors by Parties

Concerning the United States, the most critical error the state made was not being mindful of other sensitive security issues during the negotiations. As mentioned above, NATO deployed Pershing II missiles in Europe during negotiations, which angered the USSR into putting the talks on hold (The White House 1985). The United States should have been more aware of NATO’s deployments because by antagonizing the USSR, they almost put START in jeopardy. START could have met the same fate at SALT II due to this misstep. Had NATO not deployed the missiles, the United States might have been able to prevent the need to make concessions and come out with a stronger agreement in the end. However, the negotiations resumed after a brief hiatus.

The USSR also made the critical mistake of not thinking about the long-term implications of its actions. During arms control negotiations, the USSR was known to not take initiative. The USSR would make minimal counter-offers in response to the proposals that the U.S. made and simply react to the U.S. instead (Bennett 1997). This strategy was used to wear down the U.S. and goad them into making unilateral concessions. While this was effective during the negotiations, the lack of initiative led to the USSR not realizing the full benefits of soft power after ratification.

Major Accomplishments

When START I was first proposed by Ronald Reagan, it was a dramatic turn from the previous policy of solely arms limitation (Reagan 1982). In many ways, START I was a groundbreaking treaty not only because it was the first of its kind, but also because of the foundation it established for long-term arms reduction. For example, the START talks also resulted in the INF Treaty, which was the first treaty that banned an entire class of weapons (U.S. Department of State 2001). Not only did the INF Treaty ban intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs), but it also defined what an IRBM and what a ground-launched missile cruiser (GLCM) were (U.S. Department of State). This closed a semantic loophole which both parties would use and, in turn, made past arms agreements fail (Bennett 1997). Moreover, START I showed the genuine commitment of both the U.S. and the USSR to arms reduction. This commitment was shown during the dissolution of the USSR. In spite of the dissolution, the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, Belarus, and Ukraine all signed on to START I via the Lisbon Protocol to reaffirm their commitment to the treaty (Federation of American Scientists). Between being the first treaty of its kind and the foundation for global arms reduction, START I was a major diplomatic feat.

Effect on Reputation

For better or for worse, reputation has a strong effect on how negotiations are carried out. When it comes to reputation, actors can either use a distributive or integrative approach in their negotiations. In distributive negotiations, there is less chance for joint success than in integrative negotiations (Tinsley Et. Al. 2002). As a result, actors with reputations of valuing distributive negotiations are less likely to be trusted making it harder for that negotiator to get a future agreement. Moreover, there are many tempting opportunities to deceive the second party during negotiations. According to Olekalns and Smith, deception becomes more likely if goals in a dyad are not aligned. However, if there are common goals or multiple iterations of the same game, then deception decreases (Olekalns & Smith 2007). Therefore, in order for arms control agreements to succeed, the parties involved must be regarded as reputable and not deceive each other.

Despite the shortcomings involved in SALT and the early START talks, the United States and USSR were both able to finalize a treaty which was projected to reduce strategic weapons by 35%. START also held the actors accountable for complying with the terms of the agreement (Nuclear Threat Initiative). START was one of the first arms control agreements that successfully curbed proliferation, and, as a result, the reputation of both the United States and USSR benefited considerably. The agreement proved that there was a concrete shift in Soviet-American relations and that more cooperation could be expected in the future. But one of the most important aspects of START I's reputation building power is that the agreement was upheld after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Shortly after the United States Senate ratified the treaty, the USSR broke up and four strategic weapon-holding states were formed: the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus. To accommodate the change, the Lisbon Protocol

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was added so these states could become parties to the treaty, and it was signed and ratified by all parties (Federation of American Scientists). A testament to the success of START I is the fact that four states established trustworthy reputations in the realm of arms control as a result of the treaty. In short, all parties involved improved their reputation as fair and responsible negotiators.

Likelihood of Recurrence

Due to its success, START I paved the way for three updated iterations of the agreement: START II, START III, and New START. Although START I would be in effect until 2009, the United States and the Russian Federation wanted to continue momentum and did so with varying degrees of success. Even while START I was being finalized in 1990, START II talks overlapped its predecessor. START II would eventually be ratified in 1996 by the U.S. and in 2000 by the Russian Duma (Federation of American Scientists). After START II talks concluded, START III talks began. However, START III was made obsolete by the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT) in 2002, which set a cap on deployed strategic warheads to between 1,700 and 2,200 (Arms Control Association 2003). The most recent iteration of the START treaties is New START, which went into effect in 2011. New START streamlined the previous verification procedures to remove redundancies. Moreover, it did not impose limits on weapons testing of current U.S. missile programs (U.S. Department of State). Thus, the spirit of START has remained strong for over 20 years, and it has taught the United States and USSR the power of trust.

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